In The Figures

A formalized copy of the figures is included with this paper. These formalized figures contain no new content. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter the formalized figures into the record to replace the draft figures.

REMARKS

There were 21 claims in the original application numbered 1 – 21. In response to a restriction election requirement, claims 11 – 20 were withdrawn and claims 22 – 32 were added. With this response, claim 32 has been cancelled and claim 33 has been added. There are now 21 claims numbered 1 – 10, 22 – 31, and 33. There are 3 independent claims and 18 dependent claims. Claims 1, 22 and 33 are the independent claims. Claims 2 – 10 and 21 – 31 are the dependent claims. The status of the claims is as follows: claims 1 – 10 (original), claims 11 – 20 (withdrawn), claims 22- 31 (previously presented), claim 32 (withdrawn), and claim 33 (new).

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims argued herein are respectfully requested.

Background

The Examiner-cited art of Huang appears to teach a Decision Support System of a type that allows relatively complex analysis of available data for planning future activities and evaluating past activities. This appears to be accomplished in Huang by modeling a supply chain network and analyzing activity. Huang is not concerned with implementation of actual activity in a supply chain; it is only concerned with analyzing such activity.

Conversely, Applicant's invention includes a signal tracking number that is assigned to an event such as a purchase order or request for a bid. The signal tracking number uniquely identifies the event and can include metadata associated with it that can be retained at a signal tracking database. This metadata can be used to further identify important attributes associated with the event. Business entities can query the database for information pertaining to the event, thus the event information can be smaller in size further allowing sensitive data to remain at a location where it is better protected.

Election/Restrictions

At page 2, paragraph 2 of the office action the Examiner states that "newly submitted claim 32 is directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons: Claim 32 belongs classified with group III." Applicant previously elected group I.

Applicant has redrafted claim 32 as claim 33 to include mostly the elements of claim 1 and some elements of its dependent claims (most notably, claim 7) written in Beauregard claim format. For at least this reason it is believed that claim 33 would be included, by the subject matter it covers, in the group of elected claims. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner include claim 33 for consideration.

The § 103 Rejections

At page 3, paragraph 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1 – 10 and 22 - 31 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang et al., US patent no. 6,151,582.

Claims 22 – 31 are essentially claims 1- 10 in apparatus form. Applicant believes that any arguments directed toward claims 1 – 10 are applicable respectively toward claims 22 – 31 and respectfully requests that the Examiner consider such. Additionally, claim 33 is essentially claim 1 including at least some of its dependent claim elements in Beauregard claim format.

Claims 1 – 10

At page 3, paragraph 5 of the office action the Examiner states that "...Huang discloses a supply chain communication event, e.g. Figs. 1-9, 28, 34, 38..." Applicant believes that Figures 1 – 9 of Huang details the DSS 10, that Figure 28 details the seven modules for decision making, that Figure 34 interprets client requests, dispatches the request to the appropriate servers and coordinates the computation load and data access, and that Figure 38 illustrates the data flow diagram associated with the Supply Chain

Network Configurator 330. None of these figures appear to teach a supply chain communication event, thus the Examiner-cited art does not teach the invention.

Additionally, Applicant finds from the text of Huang that Figure 58 discloses the "promotion calendar Main Display Window" which is a part of Huang's "Sales Promotion Analysis" (col. 109, lines 31 – 43). It allows a user to compute the promotion impact for past promotions, estimate the impact of future promotions, and display graphically the impact of the promotions on sales. Figure 58 of Huang does not appear to disclose a central hub as disclosed in Applicant's invention and recited in the claims.

At page 3, paragraph 5 of the office action the Examiner states that Huang discloses trading partners in Figure 59 – 62. Claim 1 reads in part "generating a supply chain communication event at a sender for delivery to a set of recipients including trading partners in a supply chain." Applicant finds that the Examiner-cited figures include the text "Customers," however, Huang does not teach or disclose generating a supply chain communication event at a sender for delivery to a set of recipients including trading partners in a supply chain. Applicant believes that this is because Huang's function is to analyze supply chain communication and not directly participate in it.

At page 3, paragraph 5 of the office action the Examiner states that Huang discloses identifiers in Table 2. Claim 1 states in part "processing said event at a central hub, said processing including modifying said event to be uniquely identifiable;" At col.8, lines 50 – 61 and col. 9, lines 24 – 39 (approx.) in Huang the function of Table 2 is described. It appears from the text of Huang that the process data in the DSS Database 12 are contained in two closely related table type data structures (Table 2 and Table 3). Table 1 appears to be a header file that specifies the resolutions and values on the relevant dimensions of product, customer, time, resource, and item. Huang appears to neither teach nor disclose modifying a supply chain event at a central hub that includes making the event uniquely identifiable, thus Huang does not teach the invention.

Furthermore, claim 1 also states "...delivering said event in its modified form to said set of recipients; and querying said central hub responsive to receipt of said event." Applicant is unable to find in Huang that a supply chain communication event is modified and then delivered to a set of recipients. Indeed, Huang appears to be an ancillary single operator information analysis tool for analyzing past performance and making future projections and not an actual B2B collaboration network component for use in primary B2B operations, such as for example, a request for bids from a set of trading partners to provide carpet.

For at least these reasons, claims 1 – 10 are believed to by allowable over Huang et al. As previously explained, claims 22 – 31 are essentially claims 1 – 10 in apparatus form, and for at least this reason and the reasons cited above are believed to be allowable over Huang et al. As previously explained, claim 32 is essentially claim 1 in Beauregard claim format, and for at least this reason and the reasons cited above is believed to be allowable over Huang et al. Allowance of these claims by the Examiner is respectfully requested.
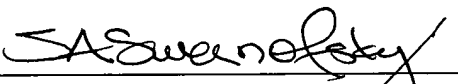
Request for Allowance

It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: October 6, 2005

Steven A. Swernofsky
Reg. No. 33,040

Swernofsky Law Group PC
P.O. Box 390013
Mountain View, CA 94039-0013
(650) 947-0700